
Exercise on Citation and Paraphrase

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This exercise consists of two sections.

The first section demonstrates how writers incorporate words and ideas from a source. That is, it provides models of how writers paraphrase, use a long or block quotation, quote only a few words or snippets, and cite an idea. In doing so, the section demonstrates the Modern Language Association, or MLA, style of citation. For a full discussion of commonly used styles of citation, including how to document electronic sources, see Fulwiler's *The College Writer's Reference* or any of the style guides on reserve at Burling Library or in the Science Library.

The second section asks you to perform the same tasks modeled in the first section. That is, it asks you to paraphrase, cite a long quotation, cite words or short phrases, and cite ideas. For the purposes of this demonstration, you may use the given source or one suggested by your tutorial professor. Please work carefully on this exercise; its results should demonstrate that you understand the basics of citation, a demonstration the college requires of each student.

Section I: Examples

Paraphrase

In writing an academic paper, you may want to paraphrase, to use different words to say what someone else has said. This process may seem simple, but it presents subtle challenges. You must digest what the author has said, understand what the author implies and means, and transform all of that into your own language. Not an easy task.

To give an example of how to paraphrase, we will use as our source passage an article from a collection exploring the relationship between philosophy and the comedy cartoon series *The Simpsons*. The collection, *The Simpsons and Philosophy: The D'Oh of Homer*, edited by William Irwin, Mark T. Conrad, and Aeon J. Skoble and published in 2001 by Carus Publishing Company of Peru Illinois, contains an article by Carl Matheson entitled "The Simpsons, Hyper-Irony, and the Meaning of Life." In this article, Matheson shows how particular episodes of the series exemplify the idea of "hyper-ironism," which he defines as "a sense of world-weary cleverer-than-thou-ness" (109). The passage quoted here, taken from pages 119-120, uses as an example of its claim the Simpsons' episode "Scenes from the Class Struggle in Springfield":

I think that, given a crisis of authority, hyper-ironism is the most suitable form of comedy. Recall that many painters and architects turned to a consideration of the history of painting and architecture once they gave up on the idea of a fundamental trans-historical goal for their media. Recall also that once Rorty's version of Derrida became convinced of the non-existence of transcendent philosophical truth, he reconstructed philosophy as an historically aware conversation which largely consisted of the deconstruction of past works. One way of looking at all of these transitions is that, with the abandonment of knowledge came the cult of knowingness. That is, even if there is no ultimate truth (or method for arriving at it) I can

still show that I understand the intellectual rules by which you operate better than you do. I can show my superiority over you by demonstrating my awareness of what makes you tick. In the end, none of our positions is ultimately superior, but I can at least show myself to be in a superior position for now on the shifting sands of the game we are currently playing. Hyper-irony is the comedic instantiation of the cult of knowingness. Given the crisis of authority, there are no higher purposes to which comedy can be put, such as moral instruction, theological revelation, or showing how the world is. However, comedy can be used to attack anybody at all who thinks that he or she has any sort of handle on the answer to any major question, not to replace the object of the attack with a better way of looking at things, but merely for the pleasure of the attack, or perhaps for the sense of momentary superiority mentioned earlier. The Simpsons revels in the attack. It treats nearly everything as a target, every stereotypical character, every foible, and every institution. It plays games of one-upsmanship with its audience members by challenging them to identify the avalanche of allusions it throws down to them. And, as "Scenes from the Class Struggle in Springfield" illustrates, it refrains from taking a position of its own (119-120).

Let's assume that we have to paraphrase this paragraph. We might come up with something like this:

*When philosophers analyze popular culture¹, they often link its ideas to those in the wider culture. For example², when Matheson analyzes *The Simpsons*, he links what he calls the hyper-ironism³ in the series to the loss of sureness⁴ in the wider culture. In the wider culture, he cites the way painters, feeling that painting had no broad purpose, turned instead to examining the history of painting, and he notes that Rorty, in deciphering Derrida, turned to taking a critical view of⁵ older ideas. In referring to the series, he notes how the writers target every aspect of life and talk down to their audience⁶, making multiple allusions to culture more or less to see if the audience can catch them. Through showing these parallel trends, Matheson implicitly defines the term hyper-ironism⁷ as the tearing down of past institutions without the ability to offer an improved replacement. Matheson's analysis typifies the wide-ranging connections made by many authors discussing popular culture from an academic perspective⁸ (119-120).*

Note carefully the decisions—about how to convey meaning, about what to leave out and what to include, about the level of vocabulary to use—that had to be made even for this one paragraph of paraphrase. In paraphrase, your voice should predominate, but you offer it to

¹ This introductory clause announces that the subject of this paragraph will be the broad subject of philosophers analyzing popular culture, even though the subject of Matheson's paragraph, the phenomenon of hyper-ironism, is much more specific.

² Note the transition "For example" that seeks to establish the relationship between the opening introductory sentence and the one following it.

³ Note that in this paraphrase there are no quotation marks around the word "hyper-ironism." Since Matheson did not invent the term and since the use of the term is attributed to him, quotation marks are not necessary. This is a judgment call; it could be argued.

⁴ The phrase "loss of sureness," attempts to paraphrase what Matheson calls the "crisis of authority." The paraphrase does not carry all the overtones implied by "crisis of authority," but it conveys enough of it for use in this particular paragraph. These guesses, weighings of purposes and words, are the sorts of calls you will have to make when you paraphrase.

⁵ This phrase is a very broad statement of ideas implied by deconstruction.

⁶ Again, though some could argue that this phrase misrepresents the complex of ideas indicated by the word "deconstruction," it seems sufficient here, where it is not the purpose to explain complex philosophical notions.

⁷ Compare this brief summary phrase with the several sentences Matheson takes to convey this idea. Though some could argue that the ideas are too compressed in the paraphrase, and that the proper balance between them is distorted by the paraphrase, this rendering puts what Matheson says about the series into one sentence, to make it parallel to the sentence earlier in the paragraph beginning "In the wider culture."

⁸ This phrase is a summary of what Matheson does in the paragraph.

the author you are paraphrasing to give a fair and precise rendering of the passage. The decisions you must make when paraphrasing exemplify why paraphrase is such a difficult art.

The Works Cited entry in the MLA style would look like this:

Work Cited

Matheson, Carl. "The Simpsons, Hyper-Irony, and the Meaning of Life." *The Simpsons and Philosophy: The D'Oh of Homer*. Ed. William Irwin, Mark T. Conrad, and Aeon J. Skoble. Peru, IL: Carus Publishing Company, 2001.

Block Quotation

In writing an academic paper you may want to incorporate a long⁹ section of another's text into your own. In such a case, you may use a block quotation, where you indent to show that the source is a quotation. Once you have done so, you need not surround the quotation with quotation marks, although you should reproduce any punctuation the original passage had.

Be wary of using block quotations too often: if your paper consists of large dollops of someone else's writing interspersed with only smidgens of your own, your professor may rightly accuse you of poor writing. Remember that, generally speaking, the goal of writing a college paper is not to show that you can copy down another author's words but to demonstrate that you can digest and explain the material in your own words.

When you use a block quotation, your own writing should introduce the quotation to your reader and lead your reader out of the quotation. You should make sure that the reader understands not merely the point the author of the quotation was making, but also the point you are making. Merely plunking a block quotation into your paper without integrating it carefully constitutes poor writing.

The source passage we will use occurs on page 108 of James L. Adams' book *Flying Buttresses, Entropy, and O-Rings: The World of an Engineer* (Harvard UP, 1991). The passage, part of his chapter "Mathematics: The Numerical Mystique," uses an example to demonstrate why math is so useful.

Could we collect solar power and store it in batteries? The only reasonably cheap high-capacity batteries presently available are the familiar ones already in cars—lead acid batteries. By looking in the Sears catalogue, I find that one of these typically holds about 90 ampere hours of energy, weighs a little under 50 pounds, and costs \$80. By looking up the energy content of gasoline in one of the many dull-looking books in my office, I find that a cubic foot of gasoline (8 gallons) contains about 25 times as much available energy as a cubic foot of battery and weighs about one third as much. A tank full of gasoline (16 gallons) therefore contains as much energy as 150 batteries, which would eight approximately 7,500 lbs, make a pile 2 ft by 5 ft by 10 ft, and have an initial cost of \$12,000. That makes gasoline look pretty good, doesn't it?

⁹ Different citation styles determine what counts as "long" in different ways. For example, in MLA you set off double-spaced quotations when they are more than four lines (Gibaldi 110); in APA you set off double-spaced block quotations for passages longer than 40 words (Fulwiler, p. 390).

But does it rule out solar power for cars? No, if we could live with less performance and range in our automobiles, or if solar electric cars are a component of an overall system utilizing solar energy. John Reuyl, President of Energy Self-Reliance, Inc., designed an interesting system (U.S. Patent No. 4, 182,290) which combines a house with photovoltaic panels and batteries with a battery-powered electric car containing a small gasoline engine/generator. One configuration studied incorporated a residence with 110 square meters of panel, 61 kilowatt hours (kwh) of battery, a 10 kw DC/AC converter, and an automobile equipped with 31 kwh (680 kg or 1,500 lbs) of batteries, a 40 hp/16w electric drive motor, and a 25 hp/10dw engine/generator. Such a vehicle would have a 60-mile range, acceleration superior to many conventional automobiles, and a top speed considerably in excess of the legal limit.

Let's imagine that we wish to write a paragraph supporting the claim that it is possible to write clearly about mathematics. We use a long quotation from Adams' text to back that claim:

Writing about mathematics need not be difficult and obscure. Many writers bring the concepts of mathematics into language that most readers can understand. James L. Adams is one example¹⁰; note the way he caters to readers unsophisticated in math when he discusses the possibility of using solar energy for everyday energy needs:

Could we collect solar power and store it in batteries? The only reasonably cheap high-capacity batteries presently available are the familiar ones already in cars—lead acid batteries. By looking in the Sears catalogue, I find that one of these typically holds about 90 ampere hours of energy, weighs a little under 50 pounds, and costs \$80. By looking up the energy content of gasoline in one of the many dull-looking books in my office, I find that a cubic foot of gasoline (8 gallons) contains about 25 times as much available energy as a cubic foot of battery and weighs about one third as much. A tank full of gasoline (16 gallons) therefore contains as much energy as 150 batteries, which would weigh approximately 7,500 lbs, make a pile 2 ft by 5 ft by 10 ft, and have an initial cost of \$12,000. That makes gasoline look pretty good, doesn't it? (108)

Adams takes care to make his paragraph reader-friendly: he uses informal questions to open and close the paragraph; he refers to specific recognizable sources like the Sears catalogue; he even admits that his reference books may be "dull-looking." But he lays his logic out clearly, while always reminding the reader of his aim.

This paragraph uses the block quotation as one example of writing that discusses mathematical concepts in clear language. Because the focus of the paragraph is the logic and clarity of the whole explanation, it seems particularly apt to quote the whole passage without breaks. Note that the sentences that follow the long quotation take the reader out of the quotation by reemphasizing the point: that Adams uses clear mathematical examples to explain his point.

¹⁰ By using the name of the author in the introduction to the block quotation, you can (in the MLA format) use only the page number at the end of the block quotation.

¹¹ This phrase "Nellie's description of the setting" encompasses the whole passage to which we refer.

In the List of Works Cited (MLA format) at the end of the paper, the entry would look like this:

Work Cited

Adams, James L. *Flying Buttresses, Entropy, and O-Rings: The World of an Engineer*. Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1991.

Using snippets

In writing an academic paper, you may use snippets, or short quotations consisting of only two or three words from another source. Such use is especially appropriate when the specific language of a text constitutes the evidence of your claim.

The source passage we will use as an example occurs on page 190 of Emily Brontë's novel *Wuthering Heights* (edited by William M. Sale, Jr.; published by W. W. Norton and Company, New York, 1972). Here Nelly Dean, who narrates part of the novel, describes the arrival of her and her charge Cathy at the house Wuthering Heights. Heathcliff, who lives there, had invited them to visit but had assured them that he will be absent. Nelly Dean narrates:

The rainy night had ushered in a misty morning—half frost, half drizzle—and temporary brooks crossed our path, gurgling from the uplands. My feet were thoroughly wetted; I was cross and low, exactly the humour suited for making the most of these disagreeable things.

We entered the farm-house by the kitchen way to ascertain whether Mr. Heathcliff were really absent, because I put slight faith in his own affirmation.

Let's suppose that we were writing a paragraph in which we were asked to describe how the setting reinforces the themes of the novel in this passage. We might end up with a paragraph like this:

Nelly's description of the setting¹¹ when she takes Cathy back to Wuthering Heights foreshadows events toward the end of the book.¹² The weather is unpleasant:¹³ "a misty morning," complete with "half frost, half drizzle." Her description of her own mood as ¹⁴"cross and low" reinforces that foreboding. Finally, her mention that she has only "slight faith" in Heathcliff's assurance of his absence seems to suggest that his treachery will triumph eventually.¹⁵(190).

Note that this method of using snippets from a source seems particularly apt in a case like this one, where the language the author uses (the words quoted in the snippets) provides evidence of the claim (that the author uses that language to foreshadow grim events in the future). In such a case, rather than quoting a whole paragraph, it seems more useful to use small pieces of that language to support the claim.

¹² In this verb and predicate lie the essence of the claim of which the snippets serve as evidence.

¹³ Note that it is good form to introduce each snippet, to assure that your reader always knows what claim you're making.

¹⁴ This phrase serves to introduce and situate the snippet "cross and low."

¹⁵ This final sentence of the paragraph also incorporates a snippet of quoted language into a claim about how the passage foreshadows Heathcliff's triumph.

The Works Cited entry in the MLA style would look like this:

Work Cited

Bronte, Emily. *Wuthering Heights*. Ed. William B. Sale. New York: Norton, 1972.

Using an idea from another source

Sometimes an idea you read may inspire another idea in you that you want to use in your academic paper. That is, reading an idea in a text may set you off in a different direction, one you might not have followed if you hadn't read that source.

If the idea you read was the source of your inspiration, then you should cite the source of that idea, even if you have neither quoted nor paraphrased.

The source of our idea is a passage from page 36 of Jonathan Spence's history *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895-1980*, published by Penguin Books, New York in 1981. In this passage Spence describes some Chinese scholars' reaction to a treaty signed between China and Japan in 1895. The scholars whose reaction he describes hear about the treaty when they are in Beijing to take the government examination, a goal toward which they have worked for decades. He emphasizes the strength of their reaction, describing particularly the role of one scholar, Kang Youwei:

Yet however patient, or inhibited, this new generation of Confucian scholar-students might have been, they could not but react with amazement and anger when the terms of the peace treaty finally negotiated between China and Japan at Simonoseki reached Beijing by telegram on April 15, 1895: China had been forced to cede both southern Manchuria and Taiwan to the Japanese, and had agreed to pay a colossal indemnity, equivalent to two hundred million ounces of silver. Japanese industries were also to be allowed into the rich Yangtze Valley area. Within hours of hearing this news, Kang Youwei and some close friends were circulating a petition urging rejection of the treaty; within days they had drafted a statement to the Emperor in the form of a memorial almost eighteen thousand characters long, cosigned with the names of more than a thousand examination candidates drawn from all eighteen provinces of China proper. The crowded meetings at a local temple in Beijing, the hurried lobbying with senior officials, the long lines of men patiently queuing outside the government bureaus to make their feelings known, the willingness of students to commit themselves in public to an antigovernment stances even while competing in the government examinations: all these circumstances made it, in the words of one contemporary observer, an unprecedented example in China of patriotic and emotional expression

Now let's suppose that, having read the above passage, we wish to write about a contemporary circumstance of which the passage reminds us:

Spence's description of how Chinese scholars sitting for the government examination reacted vehemently to the signing of the treaty with Japan in 1895 (Spence, 36) raises questions about why there is such lack of fervor in contemporary American politics. Where are the concerned groups willing to risk their own future to effect a desired change? Where are the passionate political groups seeking change for the betterment of all? It seems that in contemporary America where politicians focus only on their own reelection, no one rises up to protest.

In this paragraph, one of the ideas from Spence's passage is applied to another situation; since Spence's passage inspired the application, the writer gives credit to Spence. Note that

this paragraph focuses on the contemporary American political situation. However, the passage from Spence has clearly inspired this discussion, since the passage uses Spence's example of people taking political risks to contrast with more complacent people in the contemporary example. Thus, the citation occurs at the end of the reference to Spence, so that the reader of this paragraph knows that the questions about contemporary citizens belong to this author, not to Spence.

The Works Cited entry in the MLA format would look like this:

Work Cited

Spence, Jonathan. *The Gate of Heavenly Peace: The Chinese and Their Revolution, 1895-1980*. New York: Penguin Books, 1981.

Section II: Exercises

Use the given passages or ones recommended by your professor to complete the following tasks.

Paraphrase

Using the following source or one your professor chooses, write a paragraph that paraphrases the source; then construct an entry for the list of Works Cited. This passage is the opening paragraph (p. 104) of Charles Bazerman's essay "Linguistic and Rhetorical Studies of Disciplinary Language." This essay is one among many collected in Bazerman's book *Constructing Experience*, published in 1994 by Southern Illinois University Press in Carbondale, IL.

Here Bazerman introduces the idea that different disciplines, such as history, chemistry, and English, use language differently. He suggests that focusing attention on these differences can help scholars communicate better:

Linguistic and rhetorical studies of disciplinary language begin, but do not end, with the observation that the primary product of most disciplines, and a secondary product of all, are published texts, which are taken to constitute the knowledge of the disciplines. Thus, study of the language and rhetorical action of these texts helps us understand both the process and product of disciplinary work. Identifying differing patterns of language production, use, and form among various disciplines, as well, helps us understand the differences of activity and accomplishment among the disciplines. Several practical considerations further support the general reflexive curiosity about the language: if we understand more about the kinds of language used in disciplines and how those languages are used, we can use those languages more effectively as individuals and as members of disciplinary groups, we can prepare students better to communicate within their fields, and we can provide guidance for editors and other influentials in shaping the communication system. Finally, by demystifying the apparently arcane character of discourse within various disciplines, we provide more access to that discourse for nonspecialist or people trained in other specialist languages.

Block quotation

Using the following passage, taken from page 49 of George P. Landow's book *Hypertext 2.0: The Convergence of Contemporary Critical Theory and Technology* (The Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore 1997) or another source as directed by your professor, write a paragraph that includes a block quotation. Include a properly formatted list of works cited, as if you were including this source in a list at the end of your paper.

Although in some distant, or not-so-distant, future all individual texts will electronically link themselves to one another, thus creating metatexts and metametatexts of a kind only partly imaginable at present, less far-reaching forms of hypertextuality have already appeared. Translations into hypertextual form already exist of poetry, fiction, and other materials originally conceived for book technology. The simplest, most limited form of such translation preserves the linear text with its order and fixity and then appends various kinds of other texts to it, including critical commentary, textual variants, and chronologically anterior and later texts Hypertext corpora that employ a single text, originally created for print dissemination, as an unbroken axis off which to hang annotation and commentary appear in the by-now common educational and scholarly presentations of canonical literary texts. . . .

Snippets

Construct your own paragraph using snippets from the following passage, or one suggested by your professor. Then put this source in proper format for inclusion in a list of Works Cited.

This passage from page 66 of Toni Morrison's *Beloved* (published by Penguin in New York in 1987) describes Paul D's concerns about Beloved, who has just appeared at the Ohio home where Paul, Sethe, and Denver live in the years after the Civil War. In this passage, Paul considers how Beloved differs from the other people he has known who had experienced the horrors of slavery.

This girl Beloved, homeless and without people, beat all, though he couldn't say exactly why, considering the coloredpeople he had run into during the last twenty years. During, before and after the war, he had seen Negroes so stunned, or hungry, or tired or bereft it was a wonder they recalled or said anything. Who, like him, had hidden in caves and fought owls for food; who, like him, stole from pigs; who, like him, slept in trees in the day and walked by night; who, like him had buried themselves in slop and jumped in wells to avoid regulators, raiders, paterollers, veterans, hill men, posses and merrymakers. Once he met a Negro about fourteen years old who lived by himself in the woods and said he couldn't remember living anywhere else. He saw a witless coloredwoman jailed and hanged for stealing ducks she believed were her own babies.

Move. Walk. Run. Hide. Steal and move on. Only once had it been possible for him to stay in one spot—with a woman, or a family—for longer than a few months. That once was almost two years with a weaver lady in Delaware, the meanest place for Negroes he had ever seen outside Pulaski County, Kentucky, and of course the prison camp in Georgia.

From all these Negroes, Beloved was different. Her shining, her new shoes. It bothered him

Using an idea

Try your own hand at citing an idea you got from another source. You may use the following source paragraph or one suggested by your professor. Please also include a properly formatted entry for a list of Works Cited.

In the following passage taken from page 93 of the essay "P.C., O.J., and Truth," Susan Bordo discusses the OJ Simpson trial. This essay is included in her collection *Twilight Zones: The Hidden Life of Cultural Images from Plato to O.J.* published by the University of California Press in Berkeley in 1997.

The legitimate role of defense lawyers is to create reasonable doubt in the minds of jurors, that is, to lead them to the point where after they have sifted through all the evidence, they will have reason to doubt the proof of guilt presented by the prosecution. Nowadays, I would argue what they try to do instead is to create a world of hyperbolic doubt in which nothing can be trusted because "everything is possible," leaving jurors unable to sift and weigh what is reasonable to believe and what is sheer speculation or fantasy. Like Descartes, jurors are led into a world of far-fetched hypotheses and dizzying doubt; unlike Descartes, however, they are not shown the path back to reason. That would be counterproductive to the lawyer's goal of getting the client off. Lawyers are aided and abetted in their efforts by the epistemological susceptibilities of contemporary juries. A friend of mine asked a student in his class if she would be willing to assert, if she were on a jury, that it is beyond reasonable doubt that the earth rotates on its own axis and revolves around the sun; she said no. When he asked her why not, she said she didn't know. Descartes' evil genius is at work here, clearly.